

**REMARKS**

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-4 and 10-14. However, the Examiner indicated that claim 2 contained allowable subject matter and that claim 2 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant thanks the Examiner for noting the allowable subject matter of then pending claim 2. By the present Response, Applicant amended claim 1 and canceled claims 2 and 10-14 without prejudice. With regard to the amendments to claim 1, Applicant has incorporated the allowable subject matter of claim 2 into amended claim 1. Upon entry of the amendments, claims 1 and 3-9 remain pending, although claims 5-9 are withdrawn from consideration. In light of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of claims 1, 3 and 4.

**Claim Rejections**

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected to claims 1, 3, and 4 for containing certain informalities. Specifically, the Examiner noted that claim 1 contained “awkward language such as ‘comprising of’ and ‘at the other end in a sliding-contact surface’.” Although Applicant does not necessarily agree with the Examiner’s objections, Applicant has, nonetheless, amended claim 1. In light of these amendments, Applicant respectfully asserts that the Examiner’s objection is now moot. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the present objection to the claims.

**Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph**

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Specifically, the Examiner rejected claim 1 for the recitation “its” as vague and confusing. Although Applicant does not agree with the Examiner’s interpretation, Applicant nonetheless, in the interest of expediting prosecution, has amended claim 1 to clarify the recitation “its”. Thus, Applicant respectfully asserts that the Examiner’s rejection is now moot. In light of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the instant claims.

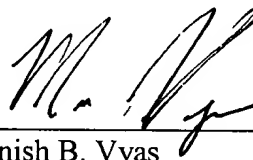
**Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103**

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 3, 4, and 10-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious in view of various references. However, as discussed above, Applicant canceled claims 10-14 without prejudice and, as such, believes that a discussion regarding these claims is moot. Additionally, Applicant amended independent claim 1 to include the subject matter of then dependent claim 2, which was indicated as containing allowable subject matter by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully asserts that amended independent claim 1 and its respective dependent claims 3 and 4 are patentable and in condition for allowance. With the foregoing in mind, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the instant claims.

**Conclusion**

In view of the remarks and amendments set forth above, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of the pending claims. If the Examiner believes that a telephonic interview will help speed this application toward issuance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



Date: May 17, 2004

Manish B. Vyas  
Reg. No. 54,516  
FLETCHER YODER  
P.O. Box 692289  
Houston, TX 77269-2289  
(281) 970-4545